

Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan  
Supplementary Planning Guidance 3

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Safety Through Design **3**

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# FOREWORD

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The Council approved this Supplementary Planning Guidance on 25 September 2001.

# SAFETY THROUGH DESIGN

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Aylesbury Vale District Council puts a high priority on the reduction of crime, disorder and the fear of crime. The purpose of this guidance is to suggest approaches to those responsible for the planning and design of the external environment that can help reduce the likelihood of criminal and anti-social behaviour and allow people to feel safer.
- 1.2 Central Government guidance and local planning policy identify community safety as a material consideration of importance in the determination of planning applications. Development in the District should be designed to take into account the principles set out in this document. When considering development proposals the Council will seek to achieve a balanced approach towards design which reconciles the need for a high quality environment with the need to create a safe environment.
- 1.3 There can be fewer things that have a greater impact on the quality of life than crime and the fear of crime. It is now widely accepted that the nature of the physical environment has a key influence on the level of criminal activity and anti-social behaviour. Well designed environments are likely to be enjoyed and supported by the local community, whereas poor design and layout can both provide opportunities for crime and lead to a breakdown of social interaction.
- 1.4 The reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour is a high priority for national and local government and the public. Although the District experiences a much lower crime rate than the national average, a recent survey carried out by Aylesbury Vale District Council showed that tackling crime and improving safety was top of the list of priorities that residents wanted the Council to take action on. The survey also showed that the crimes people worry most about are burglary, car crime, violent crime and vandalism.
- 1.5 In general, all designs should reduce opportunities for criminal and anti-social behaviour, increase the likelihood of detecting crime and reduce the fear of crime. Prevention is better than cure, and the main thrust of this guidance is to anticipate potential difficulties and resolve them through design, and thus reduce future demands on the Council, the police and other agencies in addressing problems that result from unsatisfactory schemes.

- 1.6 Although this guidance is aimed primarily at new developments, the Council also considers it to be of relevance to existing development. The extent to which development proposals have had regard to these considerations will be a criterion against which planning applications will be judged.
- 1.7 The reduction of crime and increase in community safety requires an integrated approach that extends beyond, but must include, land use planning. This Guidance focuses principally on land use planning. However, the Council is actively engaged in a wide variety of other partnership initiatives to improve community safety. These initiatives are outlined in the document "Community Safety Strategy and Action Plans" which is available from the Council's Community Safety Officer.
- 1.8 This guidance should be considered in conjunction with other Supplementary Planning Guidance produced by AVDC, including various Design Guides such as "Housing Layouts", "New houses in towns & villages", etc.
- 1.9 This document has been produced by consultation between Aylesbury Vale District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council and Thames Valley Police. Appendix 1 contains sources of further information and contacts.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 This Supplementary Planning Guidance takes into account Government circulars, legislation and advice on planning out crime and crime reduction and expands on the principles outlined in Policy GP.67 of the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan. It complements other Council initiatives including those set out in its Community Safety Strategy.

### **Government Circular 5/94**

- 2.2 Government Circular 5/94 "Planning out Crime" recognises that the planning system is an important factor in a successful crime prevention strategy. When co-ordinated with other measures, its contribution to crime reduction can be significant. This circular states that "there should be a balanced approach to design which attempts to reconcile the visual quality of a development with the need for crime prevention" (paragraph 5). It also states that "used sensitively the planning system can be instrumental in producing attractive and well-managed environments that help discourage anti-social behaviour" (paragraph 4). It acknowledges that "crime prevention is capable of being a material consideration when planning applications are considered" (paragraph 3). However, it is one of the many considerations to be taken into account and the weight that is given to crime prevention will depend on the individual circumstances of the case.

- 2.3** Care must be exercised to ensure that "designing out crime" does not lead to a "fortress mentality". The approach should not be regarded as standing apart from, or at odds with, other planning objectives. It is important that all the significant components of a development are considered together at an early stage so that potential conflicts, including those of crime prevention, can be resolved. Early, informal discussions between developers and the Council's Planning Officers are recommended in order to identify and resolve potential difficulties. When appropriate, the Council will ensure that the local Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor is involved from the early stages of development schemes to give advice on effective measures for reducing the opportunity for crime.

#### **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

- 2.4** Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Council to have regard to the crime and disorder implications of all its decisions. Under the Act the Council is required to "do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area". This duty applies to all of the Council's functions and not just to those covered by this guidance.

#### **Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan**

- 2.5** The policy in the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan that is of particular relevance is: GP.67: "The design and layout of development should reflect the principles of "Secured by Design" in relation to natural surveillance, perimeters, physical security, landscaping and lighting." The full wording of the policy and its preamble can be found in Appendix 2.

#### **Human Rights Act 1998**

- 2.6** The Human Rights Act 1998 came into force on 2nd October 2000. As a consequence of this Act local authorities and other public bodies need to ensure that their decisions and procedures do not infringe Convention Rights. In some circumstances, local authorities will need to act positively to protect those rights.

- 2.7** The subject of this guidance note, safety through design, which is concerned with designing development for community and individual safety, is considered to involve the following human rights issues: -

1. Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life; and
2. The First Protocol  
Article 1: Protection of property.

- 2.8** The Council has produced this document as a positive act to assist in the protection of those rights. It is considered that the guidance contained within

is compatible with those rights and with the European Convention of Human Rights generally.

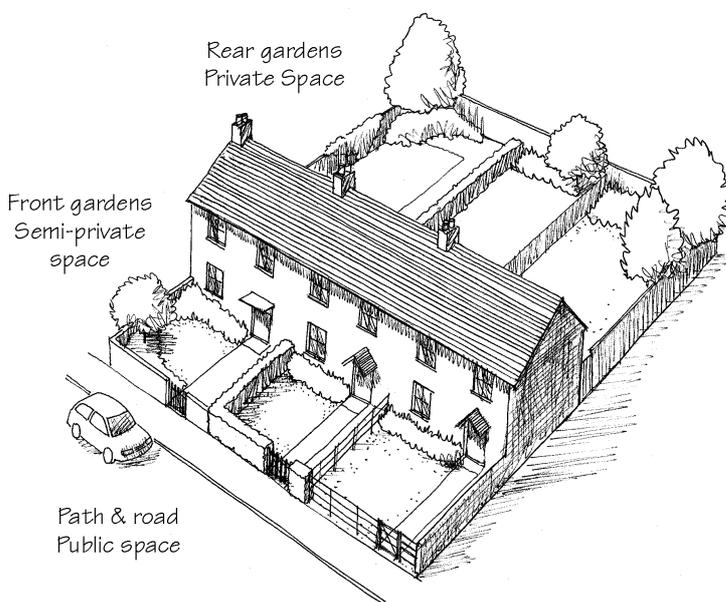
### **Disability Discrimination Act 1995**

- 2.9** The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requires public authorities to ensure that services, facilities and the environment are accessible by people with disabilities. This requires that easy access should be built into the design of the environment alongside factors that ensure public safety. Both needs should be accommodated in design.

## **3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

### **3.1 Defensible Space**

- 3.1.1** The concept of creating defensible space is concerned with designing the physical layout of communities to allow or encourage residents to control the areas around their homes. The description "defensible" is used in this context to imply control over and concern or interest in an area of land. The successful application of the concept in a development brings about an increase in resident involvement rather than reliance on local authority or police involvement to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The area around a building can be classified as one of four groups of space - private, semi-private, semi-public or public. "Private" space includes all the space within a dwelling for example, as well as an enclosed rear garden. Front gardens however are "semi-private", because although occupied by one family or resident, they are accessible to others from the road or footpath.



- 3.1.2** Public space includes the pavements and roads of a development. Areas such as communal parking bays can also be viewed as public, whilst shared corridors within multiple-occupied dwellings are semi-public. When space is seen to be more under the control of residents, it is considered to be less

public or more private and so the likelihood of strangers or inappropriate behaviour being challenged increases. The larger the number of people who share a territory, the less each person feels responsible for its upkeep, or takes an interest in who else is using the area. It is viewed as "public" or "semi-public" space.

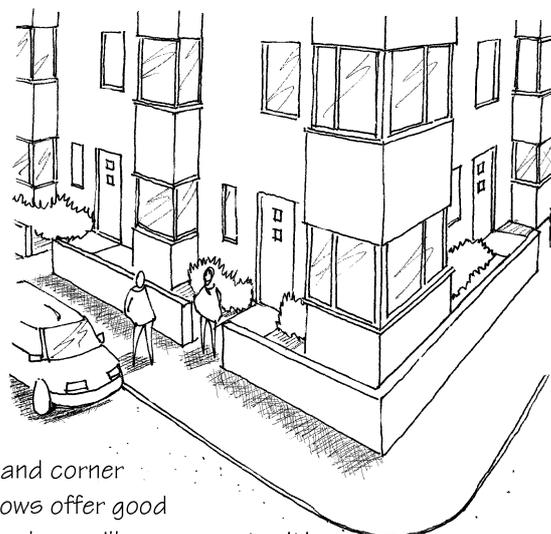
**3.1.3** It is possible to alter the way people perceive space through design. Clear boundaries between public and private space should be provided. Physical structures such as walls or fences provide the strongest form of boundary definition, though it is not always necessary to provide a physical structure. For example, the use of different paving materials in a communal entrance from those of the pavement will encourage the occupier to consider it to be their land and will give the impression to visitors that they are entering more private property. Similarly the provision of gateposts (even without gates) gives the impression of privacy. Soft landscaping and planting can be used effectively to define boundaries between public and private space.

**3.1.4** The use of structures to mark the transition from public to private space is a more obvious way of promoting ownership. Fences, walls and the lines of buildings themselves clearly show ownership or transition from public to private space.

## **3.2 Natural Surveillance**

**3.2.1** Natural surveillance is fundamental to the achievement of community and personal safety. If the chances of detection are thought to be high, the perceived risk by potential offenders will also be high and the chances of crime being committed will be lower. Natural surveillance can be increased by encouraging and facilitating the use of an area by as large a number of people as possible. It can also be achieved through design.

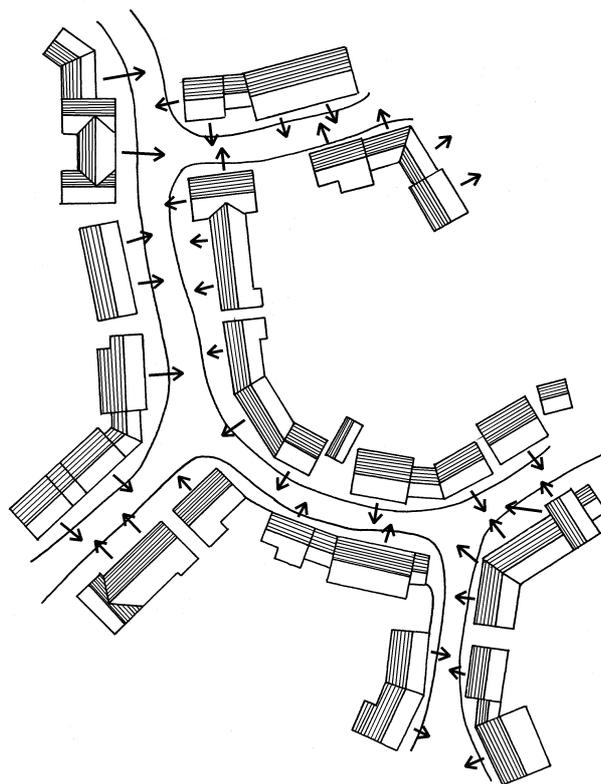
**3.2.2** It is important to ensure that spaces around buildings, foot and cycle path routes and open spaces are overlooked by the occupiers of buildings or by passing pedestrians or motorists. Windows looking out over pathways or other public areas will create an impression of observation and deter criminal activity. Entrances to buildings should be visible from the street. Consideration should be given to locating kitchen and bay windows to the front elevation of houses to provide increased surveillance.



*Bay and corner windows offer good natural surveillance opportunities.*

**3.2.3** It is important to achieve a balance between maintaining adequate privacy and allowing natural surveillance. It is possible to design groups of buildings so that they have reasonably unobstructed views of neighbouring buildings and frontages, open spaces, parking areas and pathways. This principle can be applied to both residential and commercial buildings.

**3.2.4** Where opportunities for natural surveillance are restricted, it may be appropriate to install other deterrents such as CCTV to complement the level of natural surveillance.



### **3.3 Lighting**

**3.3.1** Research<sup>1</sup> has confirmed that an increase in the level of lighting in places where public lighting is weak or uneven decreases the likelihood of crime occurring. It will also reduce the fear of crime and this in turn encourages the use of pathways and facilities.

**3.3.2** The provision of lighting is subject to guidance produced by the County Council and by Government. The relevant guidance documents are listed in Appendix 3. This guidance considers that lighting should be provided in all residential areas along pedestrian and vehicular routes (including cycle paths) and in other areas where public security and safety are an issue.

**3.3.3** Alternative ways of providing lighting where it is not a local authority requirement include installing wall-mounted lights on the buildings in that street. This allows the users of the buildings to benefit from the lighting, but it may be necessary to impose a covenant on the building owners/tenants to

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<sup>11</sup> Research carried out by Professor Ken Pease, University of Huddersfield - Lighting and Crime 1999; Dr. Kate Painter, University of Cambridge - case study of Dudley, West Midlands

maintain the lighting. Developers may wish to install lighting in streets where it is not a requirement of the adopting authority. In such instances, the authority may adopt the lighting subject to prior agreement on its standard and to the payment by the developer of a commuted sum towards its future maintenance.

**3.3.4** Care should be taken not to encourage use of pathways or public areas when it would be better not to do so. It can be possible in some instances to create a sense of safety in an area and at a time of day when that area should not in fact be used. So it may be wise, for example, not to light a footpath that has no function after dark in order to discourage its night-time use, rather than to provide lighting that will encourage use and create a false sense of security.

**3.3.5** It is important when designing the positioning and type of lighting for an area to consider the character of that area, its intended use and likely hours of use. This will be of particular importance in areas of the District such as conservation areas and in rural areas. The form and intensity of lighting should be appropriate to the development and to the streetscene. Developers should be able to justify the lighting design for their development.

**3.3.6** Lighting should be of a consistent type in an area in that colours of light should not be mixed. Lighting that causes colour distortion, such as low-pressure sodium, should be avoided. Systems should provide good colour discrimination. Developers should be able to demonstrate the suitability, reliability and energy efficiency of the lighting design for their development. All lighting should comply with British Standards.

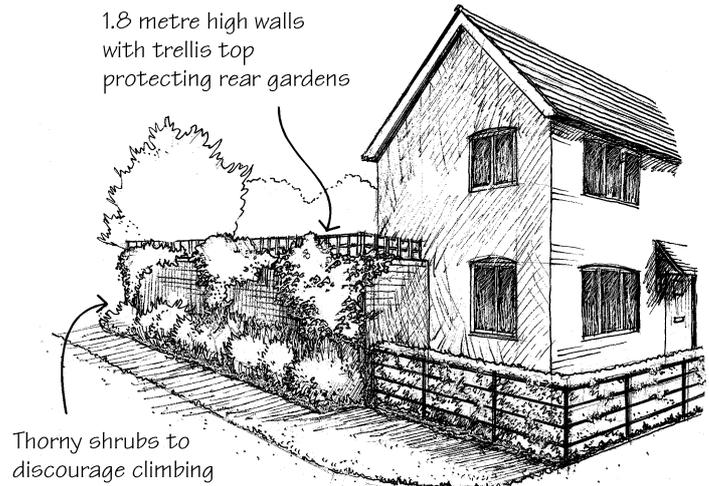
**3.3.7** Lighting should illuminate potentially dark corners in public areas as well as the main circulation areas, although care will also need to be taken that light spillage skywards is minimised and that lighting direction and intensity do not affect residents in their homes.

**3.3.8** Fittings should where possible be out of reach and tamper proof. Where low level lighting is to be used, the fittings should be vandal resistant.

## **3.4 Landscape**

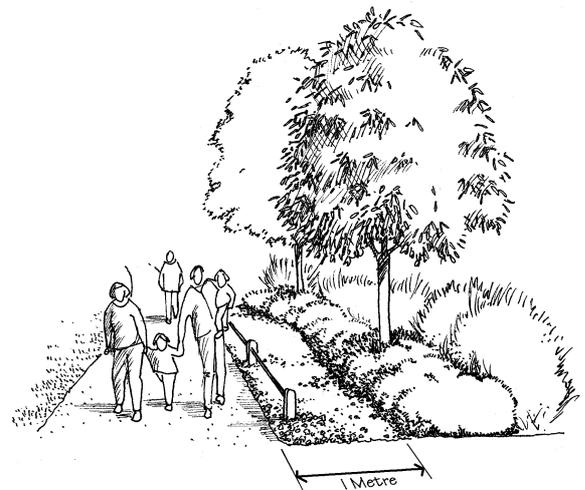
**3.4.1** Well designed public areas improve the quality of the environment. Planting plays an important part in this by softening the harsh materials or outlines of buildings and helps to create a sense of ownership and community.

**3.4.2** Well-designed landscape schemes can actively deter crime by creating physical barriers between buildings and pathways for example. The planting of shrubs alongside a wall will reduce the chances of potential criminals climbing the wall to gain entry to a property, particularly if the shrubs are spiny.



**3.4.3** Landscape schemes should not provide opportunities for criminals. Trees or benches placed close to properties can enable unauthorised access, although measures such as crown raising can be used to prevent trees being used in this manner. Similarly, tall planting should be kept away from doors so that hiding places are not created or views from or to the door are impaired.

**3.4.4** Planting schemes alongside pathways through open space should also avoid the creation of hiding places. Ground cover shrubs adjacent to pathways do not affect visibility, low growing shrubs (up to 1 metre high) should be set back 1 metre and others 3 metres from the edges of pathways. This provides a graduated increase in height of planting outwards from the pathway. Breaks in the planting that lead to places of safety provide escape routes for people should they feel threatened.



**3.4.5** Hard landscape materials and street furniture such as benches, paved areas and litter bins should be designed and located to minimise opportunities for anti-social behaviour. Care should however be taken in their location so that they do not impair vision splays for vehicles, cyclists or pedestrians. They should be vandal resistant and securely anchored to prevent their removal and use as missiles. The use of certain coping stones on low boundary walls will discourage their mis-use by people standing or climbing on them and consequently reduce the likelihood of damage.

**3.4.6** Guidance on the planting of trees in or near highways is the subject of guidance from the County Council. The document is listed in Appendix 3.

### **3.5 Maintenance**

**3.5.1** The intended use of each area of land should be obvious in order to enable high standards of maintenance, which in turn encourage a sense of pride in the community and also encourage more frequent use. Poor maintenance conversely reduces the levels of use and often leads to increased vandalism.

**3.5.2** It is normal practice for open spaces, roads and pathways to be transferred into public ownership after completion of the development. Transfer can only be completed when the relevant Council or other organisation is satisfied with the condition of the area and developers will be required to maintain any such area until the adoption is completed. Guidance on the process for the adoption of open space by Aylesbury Vale District Council is listed in Appendix 3 and guidance on the adoption of roads and footpaths can be obtained from Buckinghamshire County Council.

**3.5.3** Developers must ensure maintenance regimes are planned prior to the commencement of building and that the quality of any items such as lighting or planting is maintained as a condition of adoption. Developers should inform purchasers and tenants of the regime and any consequent liability.

**3.5.4** In areas that are to be retained by occupiers, such as paved areas or communal parking areas (residential or commercial), it is important to clarify responsibility from the start. A sense of ownership encourages care of an asset and can increase its use.

### **3.6 Circulation Routes & Accesses**

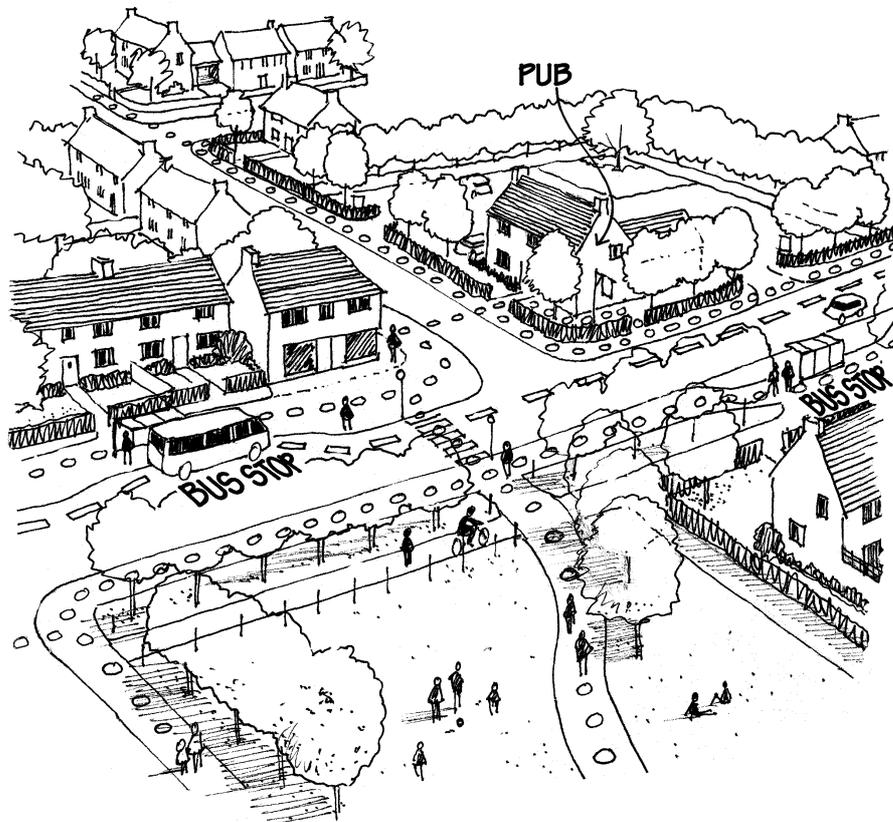
**3.6.1** One of the core components of the Local Plan is that of sustainable development. One of the basic principles of sustainability is that, in a new development, residential areas should be linked by pathways to the main community facilities. Routes should encourage mutual surveillance between roads, footpaths and cycle ways. Developers should avoid designing secluded routes.

**3.6.2** Developers should avoid designing accesses leading along the rear boundaries of houses, as they are not only a potential source of nuisance to the occupiers but also tend to be secluded.

**3.6.3** The point of access between roads or pathways leading to the buildings or open spaces they serve should be open to view and not hidden. It may be appropriate, particularly where there is more than one access to a building - for example in many public buildings, to have controlled access by means of gates. Care has to be taken that access is available for the emergency services.

**3.6.4** The foot/cycle path and road pattern leading to and from facilities such as pubs, community centres and other buildings likely to be open until late should allow people to disperse along a variety of routes. Similar consideration should be given to school access routes. Such buildings should be provided with direct access to public transport routes and to the network of foot and cycle paths. A choice of routes will speed dispersal and reduce the chances of nuisance being caused to nearby residents.

**3.6.5** Houses situated near schools, pubs or community centres should be set back from access routes in order to limit nuisance, but should be kept close enough to the route to maintain effective natural surveillance. A distance of 6 metres is the approximate distance beyond which it becomes feasible for a resident to grow a high hedge at the front boundary and this may be used as a guide where appropriate.



### 3.7 Building Design

**3.7.1** This document does not set out to prescribe the detailed design of individual buildings. It should however be noted that the design of a building and the space around it can contribute towards crime prevention.

**3.7.2** Opportunities to increase and allow natural surveillance should be taken by the positioning of windows to overlook the approaches to buildings. The construction of walls or single storey roofs close to first floor windows should be avoided to discourage access being gained to those windows. It is recognised that residential extensions can often not avoid the construction of walls or roofs in such positions, but wherever possible they should be avoided. Where not avoidable, the use of other security methods may be more appropriate.



**3.7.3** The Council supports the Secured By Design Award Scheme that sets out detailed advice on layout, type of locks, windows, doors, etc. that can be used to deter crime. Research<sup>2</sup> carried out by the University of Huddersfield has recently shown that areas built to Secured By Design standards experience 67% less crime than those that do not reach the standard.

**3.7.4** Information on the scheme can be obtained from the Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor , from AVDC's Building Control division (contact numbers for whom are listed in Appendix 1) or from the Secured By Design website ([www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com))

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<sup>2</sup> Research by Rachel Armitage, University of Huddersfield - Evaluation of Secured by Design Housing within the West Yorkshire area, 2000.

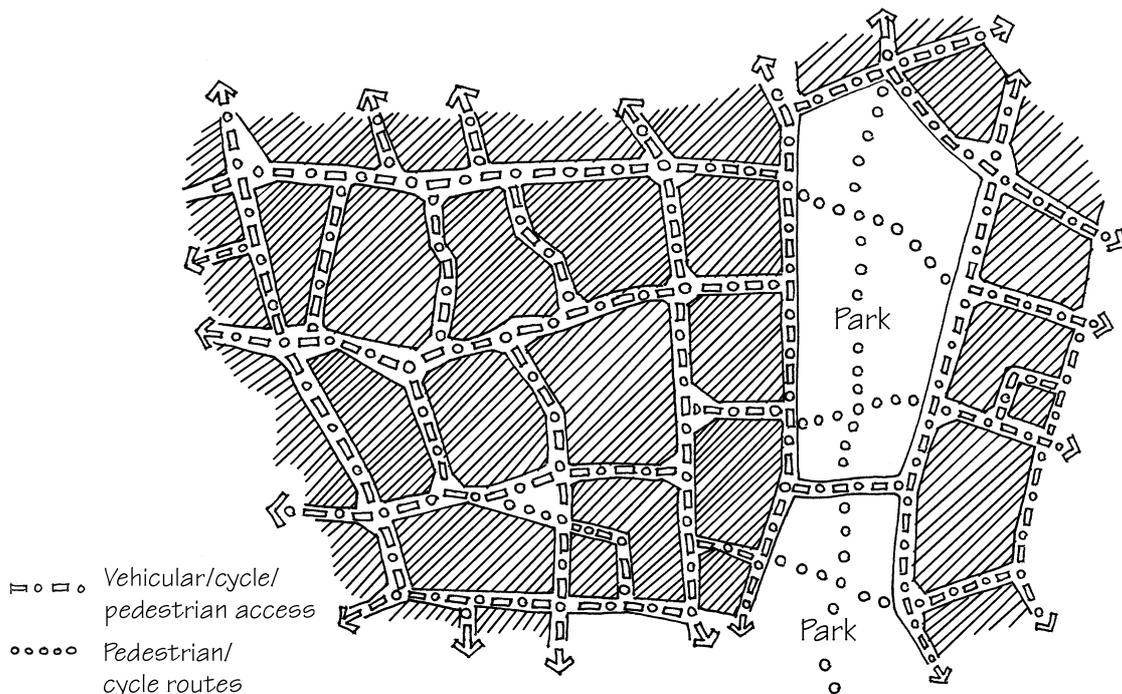
## DEVELOPMENT SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES

### 4.1 Residential areas

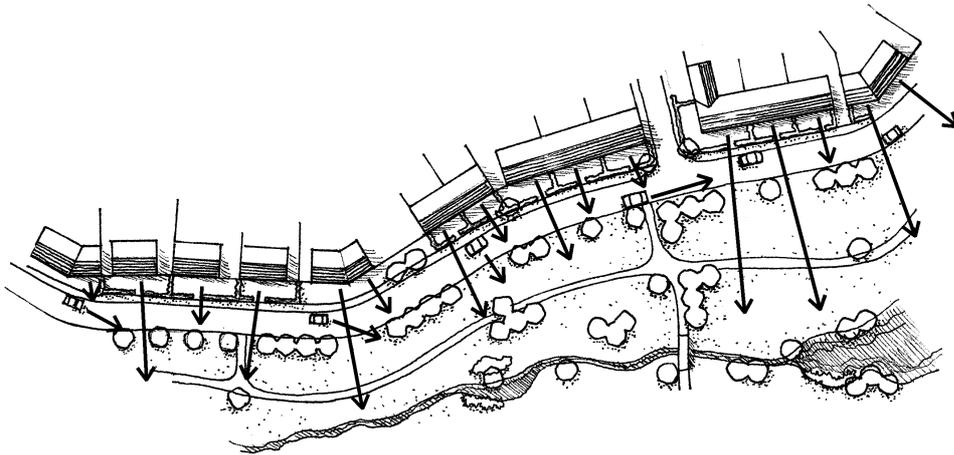
4.1.1 Well-designed housing layouts can significantly reduce crime and the fear of crime. The majority of crime in residential areas is burglary, theft, vandalism and car crime. Developers should incorporate the design features described below into housing areas and the Council will consider the degree to which this has been achieved when determining planning applications.

4.1.2 Large new residential developments should be divided into recognisable neighbourhoods. This encourages a sense of community and a sense of pride. Residents are more likely to be alert to strangers and to anti-social behaviour. Neighbourhood divisions should be made through the middle of blocks of housing - usually along rear garden boundaries - rather than along streets, so that dwellings on either side of a street have a similar character.

4.1.3 Layouts for new housing areas should provide pathways to facilities and link with existing ones by the most direct route possible and should ensure they are safe to use. The need for short cuts should be avoided by designing schemes where the roads and pathways are linked up, ideally with no dead-end cul-de-sacs. Grid or distorted grid layouts of an optimum size provide the best arrangement for linked up routes which avoid the need for short cuts. This is intended to encourage the use of only practical routes that will dictate the form of the new layout.

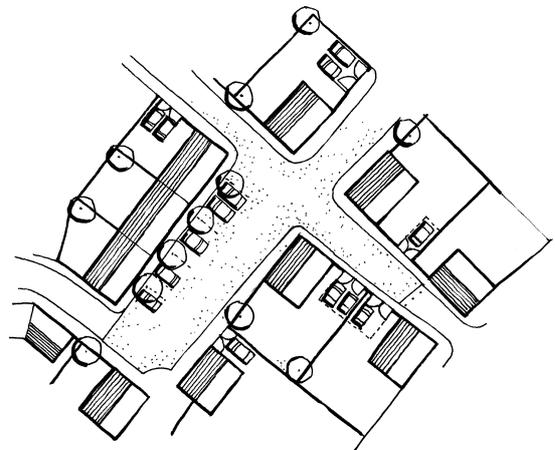


**4.1.4** A mix of housing types within a street allows for a wider level of surveillance, as the mix of residents will be wider as well. Starter homes are often vacant during the day, family homes have intermittent occupation during the day while many elderly persons' homes are occupied for most of the day. Each of these groups will have differing levels of vulnerability. Ensuring a mix of residents will increase the chances of round the clock observation.



**4.1.5** Dwellings should face onto open spaces, play areas, streets, pathways or waterways. Designing kitchen windows and bay windows at the front of the dwelling can make the frontage more active. This not only increases security for the dwelling itself but also increases the surveillance of those areas overlooked.

**4.1.6** Adequate parking should be provided to the front or wherever possible within the enclosed curtilage of dwellings. In areas where there has to be shared parking such as flats, those areas should be well lit and be visible from the dwellings and where appropriate from passing foot or vehicle traffic. Parking bays should preferably be grouped in small numbers and relate clearly to specific dwellings. Safe pedestrian routes should be provided between parking areas and the dwellings.



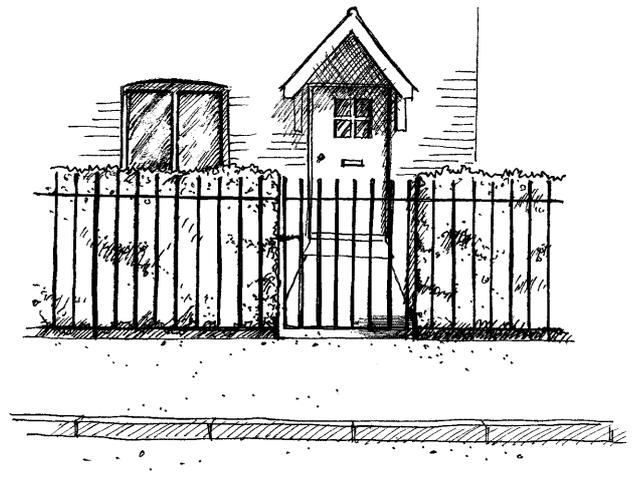
- 4.1.7** Consideration should be given to the need to keep wheelie bins and recycling baskets within the curtilage of houses, but in such a location as to allow easy removal to the edge of the property. Any area designed for their storage should not be positioned in such a way as to allow its use to gain entry to houses or to rear gardens.
- 4.1.8** Pathways for everyday use should be provided along routes likely to be in frequent use, for example those leading to shops, schools or community facilities. Pathways existing on site before development should where possible be retained if the areas or facilities they serve are retained. This will help to integrate the development with neighbouring communities and encourage pedestrian movement.
- 4.1.9** Pathways within view of the road are preferred, providing for mutual surveillance between all forms of transport and the fronts of houses. Pathways or open space leading along the rear boundaries of dwellings should be avoided. Where these are unavoidable, the use of spiny planting between the fence or wall and the pathway or open space will discourage criminals from climbing to gain access.
- 4.1.10** Where access to the rear of dwellings is provided, such access should be protected by lockable gates and should avoid the creation of unobserved publicly accessible areas. A change in surface material at the roadside edge of the access will help to give a sense of privacy and ownership.



**4.1.11** Vehicular access to groups of dwellings should have symbolic thresholds to create a sense of ownership and privacy. Changes in surface materials or the narrowing of entrances by the provision of gateways, for example, can achieve this. It is important to reconcile this requirement with the need to ensure that roads are of adoptable standard and suitable for use by emergency and refuse vehicles.



**4.1.12** Rear gardens should adjoin where possible for mutual protection. Rear boundaries backing on to pathways, open spaces or roads should be avoided for both security and privacy. Garden boundaries that abut public space should resist climbing and could be in the form of brick walls with trellis top. Rear and side gardens should be enclosed and be provided with a lockable and unclimbable gate. Front gardens should be enclosed with railings, fences, walls or hedges. Consideration may need to be given however to the location and character of the area, particularly in the rural areas.



**4.1.13** Lighting in residential areas should preferably be provided on all pedestrian as well as vehicle routes and any areas (such as shared parking areas) where safety and security may be of concern. Consideration should be given however to the County Council requirements as mentioned in section 3.3.

**4.1.14** Street naming and numbering should be clear and logical to assist visitors and emergency services in locating properties quickly.

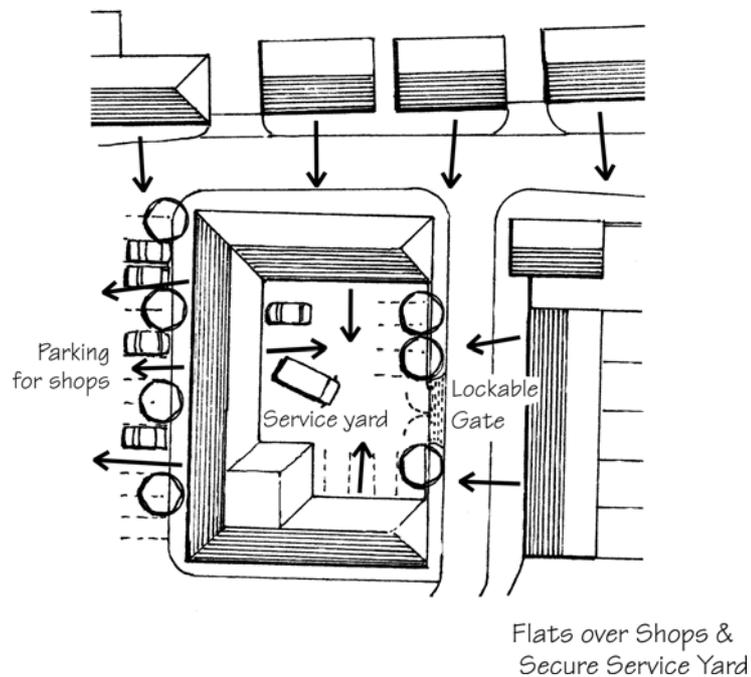
## **4.2 Town, Neighbourhood & Local Centres**

- 4.2.1** The Council wishes to support and enhance the town, neighbourhood and local centres throughout the district. These areas are frequently the target of burglary and vandalism and also suffer from anti-social behaviour. It is important to their vitality and commercial success that they are safe and attractive. One of the most effective ways of achieving this is to encourage pedestrian traffic during both day and evening times, but pedestrians need to perceive the centre to be safe before they will use it.
- 4.2.2** The number, size and density of licensed premises can have a significant impact on an area, particularly in town centres. Consideration should be given to the location of evening uses (such as pubs or community centres) so that nuisance to nearby dwellings is minimised.
- 4.2.3** The centre should contain a range of uses. For instance, the provision of flats above shops extends the period of activity and surveillance, though a balance is needed between the benefits arising from such a mix and the potential disturbance to residents.
- 4.2.4** Dwellings in town, neighbourhood and local centres should have windows that overlook public spaces and parking areas in order to maximise natural surveillance. Local shopping areas should be overlooked by surrounding housing.
- 4.2.5** Security measures such as shutters should be considered in only exceptional circumstances. Where shutters are necessary they should be of an open grille type that allow light out from and into the building. This increases the chances of observing intruders inside the property and is of greater visual benefit. They also provide the chance of window shopping, which in turn will encourage more pedestrian activity. Solid shutters provide surfaces for graffiti and give an unwelcoming appearance.
- 4.2.6** Shops should be encouraged to have 24 hour internal lighting in order to deter burglary and to make the street feel safer at night. Design guidance on "Shop-fronts and Associated Advertisements " is produced by the District Council and is listed in Appendix 3.

**4.2.7** Well-placed street furniture in public areas around centres can raise the quality of the area and bring a sense of civic pride. It can also be located to be an obstruction to crime. Careful consideration should be given to the placing of items such as benches and bollards to take account of the requirements of the disabled and sight-impaired.

**4.2.8** Parking areas and cycle stands in local or neighbourhood centres should be visible from the shops and should be sited to allow clear views into them from passing traffic. They should be designed in such a way as to deter their use as unofficial playgrounds. Cycle stands should allow the locking of cycles. Adequate car parking should be provided for any associated dwellings, bearing in mind that dual use will not be possible at some times of day.

**4.2.9** Service yards should be secure and lockable with no shared use by shoppers or residents. Alternatively, shops can be serviced from the front of the building at agreed hours. Storage areas for goods and for refuse should be secure and lockable. They should be large enough to accommodate needs during periods of peak demand. Such areas should be built in a manner so that they are not subject to arson attacks or to mis-use.

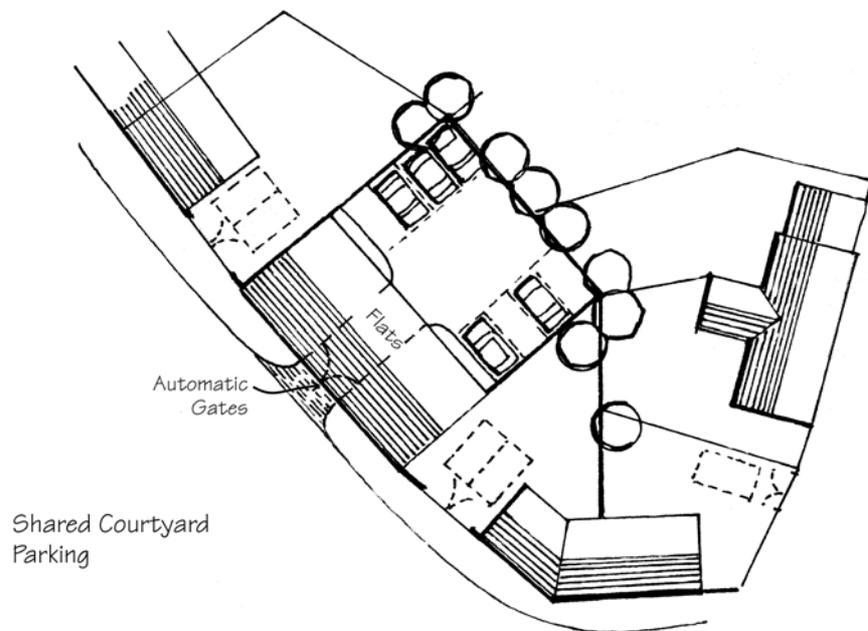


### 4.3 Car Parks

**4.3.1** Problems most commonly associated with car parks (both commercial and in residential areas) are theft from and of vehicles. Another problem is fear of crime. The latter can be problematical both within a car park and on the routes leading to it.

**4.3.2** Car parks should be designed to be overlooked from the road and/or from neighbouring buildings, allowing for increased natural surveillance. The boundaries should be designed in such a way as to allow clear views into and out from the car park. In some locations such as rural areas or Conservation Areas however, consideration should be given to the impact of car parks on the street scene.

**4.3.3** Shared parking in residential areas can be provided in a number of ways, such as courtyards with lockable gates.



**4.3.4** Well-defined footpaths should be provided leading as directly as possible from the parking bays to the pedestrian entrances and facilities served. These paths should be clearly lit and sign-posted where appropriate.

**4.3.5** Lighting of the whole area should be provided to give a consistent level of light, taking account of any support pillars or similar structures. Light spillage and pollution should be minimised.

The following points apply principally to public car parking areas:

**4.3.6** The layout of large car parks should avoid the creation of numerous dead-ends that cause a decrease in the amount of passing vehicle and pedestrian traffic and allow clear circulation.

**4.3.7** When not in use, consideration should be given to securing car parks. This not only aids the security of the building they serve but also deters anti-social behaviour. Traffic calming measures can be considered as an alternative to or in addition to securing a car park.

**4.3.8** Planting within large surface car parks and surrounding multi-storey car parks is desirable to enhance the environment and to provide shade. Tree planting can also soften the visual impact of such areas. Planting design should take into account the need for surveillance and the users perception of personal safety. Low growing shrubs to sub-divide large areas of surface car parks and around boundaries are suitable in order to maximise visibility whilst minimising maintenance.

**4.3.9** Care should be taken in the choice of species so that the effects of lighting or surveillance (natural or CCTV) are not reduced. Siting of new CCTV installations should take account of existing planting and its likely growth.

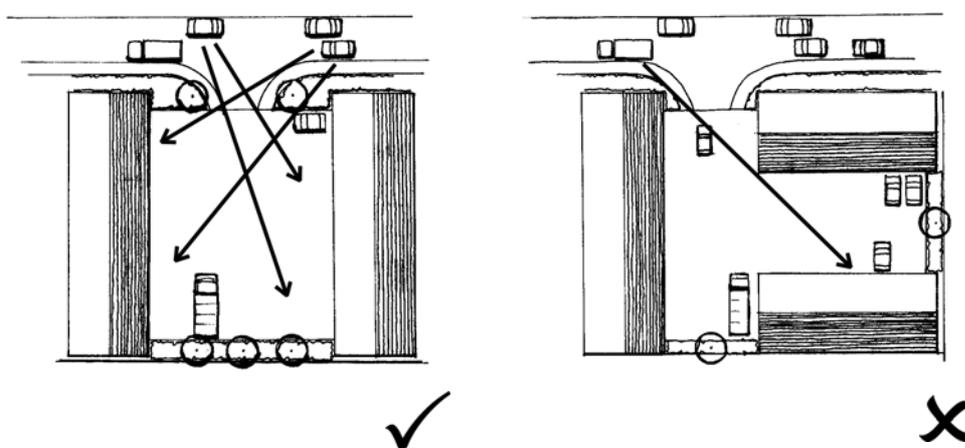
**4.3.10** AVDC supports the Secured Car Park Award scheme. This scheme sets standards for surveillance, security, signage, landscape, maintenance, decoration and refurbishment and requires adherence to those standards for the security and welfare of the car park users.



#### 4.4 Employment Areas

4.4.1 Employment buildings are subject to the threat of burglary and vandalism particularly at night when they are often unoccupied. Layouts that provide large areas of pavement, car park or road can attract anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Additional problems are those associated with the safety of staff who work out of normal hours.

4.4.2 Where such buildings form an "estate", the area should be identified by either a physical gateway or by a symbolic threshold such as different road surfacing and should have appropriate signage.



4.4.3 Access points and non-enclosed service areas and parking areas should be overlooked by the building they serve and by passing traffic from the road and footpaths. Well designed cycle stands that allow the locking of cycles should be provided adjacent to or within view of building entrances.

4.4.4 Staff and visitor entrances should be visible and directly accessed from the road or front car park so that people do not have to use rear accesses. The entrances should be overlooked from the building.

4.4.5 External storage areas should be within secure compounds. Any flammable materials should be stored away from walls and buildings and should take account of the need for access by emergency vehicles. Goods storage areas should be visible by passers-by and be lit at night. Refuse storage areas should where possible be away from the building and securing rings or earth pins should be provided to enable moveable containers to be secured.

**4.4.6** Pedestrian and cycle routes that could be a short-cut to other facilities should not normally run through industrial estates or business parks. If a path is available after working hours it may encourage criminal behaviour and is also likely to be more secluded at such times and at weekends. Routes should however be provided for bona-fide visitors and particularly for employees. Pathways from neighbouring residential areas should be designed with the principles in section 4.6 in mind.

## **4.5 Open Spaces**

**4.5.1** Open space for informal use by members of the public can contribute to the character of an area and enhance the environment. It also provides recreational facilities. Open space should be designed as an integral part of any development and should be closely linked to the adjoining developed areas.

**4.5.2** The function of each area of open space should be defined at an early stage so that it can be designed for its intended use. For example, the sense of isolation created by a large space may be desirable. Areas intended for use by small children should be smaller and close to housing, allowing maximum surveillance.

**4.5.3** Open spaces that include young children's equipped play areas should be overlooked by surrounding houses and by passing pedestrians. Informal kick-about areas and youth shelters should be located in such a way as to be visible but avoid the chances of nuisance being caused to adjoining residents and dwelling walls.

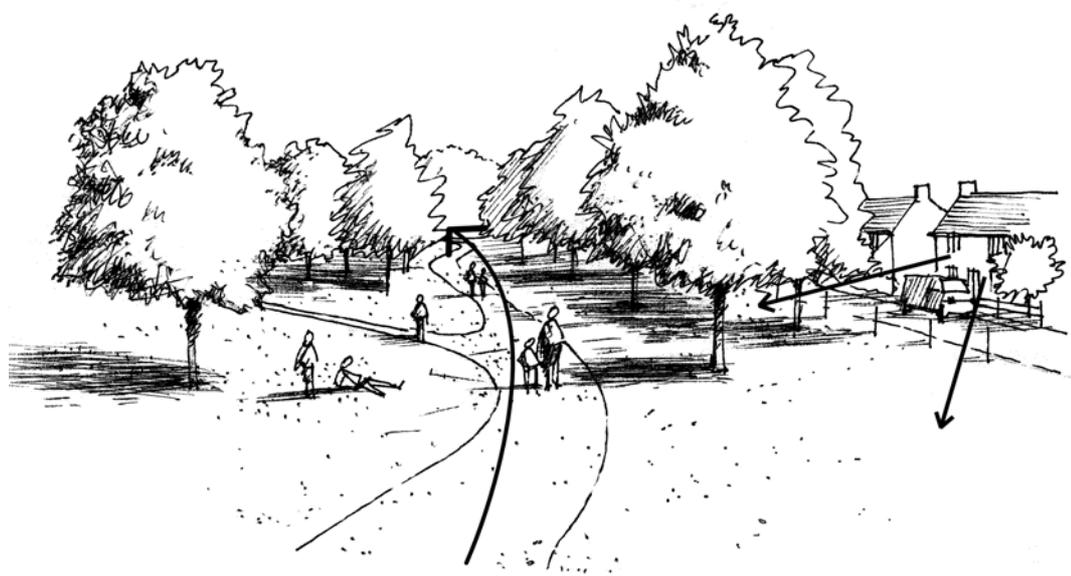


- 4.5.4** Planting should be provided in open spaces as it greatly enhances the environment. However the planting should be laid out so as not to obscure views of and from the main thoroughfare. Gaps should be created in long planting areas to provide views through and escape points. Thorny shrubs can be used to deter access to rear or side boundaries of private property or to discourage the use of shrub beds as hiding places.
- 4.5.5** The perimeter of the open space should be protected to prevent access by unauthorised vehicles. The protection can be in the form of fencing, hedging, posts, mounds, ditches or high kerbs, though care should be taken in using fencing not to detract from the open character of the area. Entrances should be provided with barriers or bollards which allow access by pedestrians, wheelchairs and prams but discourage access by unwanted vehicles such as cyclists (other than where cyclepaths cross the area) and motor cyclists. Controlled access should be provided for maintenance vehicles.
- 4.5.6** Dwellings should face onto rather than back onto open spaces, allowing more natural surveillance from active frontages. It also deters intruders from gaining access to the dwellings and reduces the chances of nuisance being caused to the occupiers.
- 4.5.7** Guidance on the process for adoption of open space and on the standards for adoption of open space is provided by AVDC and is listed in Appendix 3.

## **4.6 Foot & Cycle Paths**

- 4.6.1** Foot and cycle paths are an important element of the Council's commitment to sustainable development. Provision of such facilities is fundamental to reducing dependence on private cars. In order to encourage greater use of paths they should be designed to be safe for the user, as well as pleasant to use. They should be provided in locations where they are likely to be well used and should be designed to serve all main community facilities as well as residential and employment areas.
- 4.6.2** Foot and cycle paths should be designed with an appropriate landscaped setting. The creation of narrow corridor-like paths should be avoided as these can appear threatening. The optimum width for a pathway corridor where the path does not follow the highway is 5 metres. Where landscaping follows the line of a path, gaps should be left to create exit points and to allow greater visibility, thereby increasing the user's sense of safety.

**4.6.3** Paths should be designed to provide good visibility along the route. Sharp changes in direction should be avoided wherever possible so as to enable long views. Consideration should be given to the requirements of disabled and sight-impaired users.



**4.6.4** Paths intended for 24-hour use should be well lit at night and signposts provided where appropriate. Where it is not appropriate to light paths at night, alternative safe routes should be provided, for example alongside roads.

**4.6.5** Guidance on foot and cycle path is provided by the County Council and by the National Cycle Network and is listed in Appendix 3.

## Further Information and Contacts

### Information:

Community Safety Strategy and Action Plans (AVDC, Bucks CC and Thames Valley Police)

Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan – Deposit Draft 1998

Planning out Crime (DoE Circular 5/94)

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Police Architectural Liaison Manual (Home Office Crime Prevention Centre, 1987)

Secured By Design Award Scheme

The Secured Car Parks Award Scheme

Access Guide for Aylesbury

AVDC Design Guides

### Contacts:

This document has been produced following consultation between Aylesbury Vale District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council and Thames Valley Police.

Further advice can be obtained from:

Aylesbury Vale District Council:

- Community Safety Officer - 01296 595005
- Forward Plans Division - 01296 585439
- Building Control Division - 01296 585459
- Tree Officer - 01296 585368/585586

Buckinghamshire County Council:

- Community Safety Officer - 01296 382387
- Highways Development Control Team - 01296 382419 / 382837
- Rights of Way - 01296 382413

Thames Valley Police:

- Crime Prevention Design Advisor - 01296 621933

### Policy GP67

#### Safe and Secure Development

**4.132.** In association with the Police authorities, the Council is keen to promote good practice in applying "Secured by Design" principles. Crime prevention is a material consideration in planning decisions. It is possible with careful layout and design of development to avoid obvious opportunities for crime. This can be achieved by maximising natural surveillance, encouraging a mix of uses and allowing views to permeate development. "Threatening" designs should be avoided, such as poorly lit subways and high walled footways. The objective should be to create a safe environment. The Council will produce supplementary planning guidance relating to "Secured By Design".

**GP.67** The design and layout of development should reflect the principles of "Secured by Design" in relation to natural surveillance, perimeters, physical security, landscaping and lighting.

Buckinghamshire County Council -  
Street Lighting Policy 1999

DETR - Lighting in the Countryside -  
Towards good practice

AVDC - (draft) Supplementary Planning Guidance -  
External lighting

Buckinghamshire County Council –  
Highway Trees Policy

AVDC - (draft) Design Guide:  
Shop fronts and associated advertisements

AVDC - (draft)  
Adoption Standards For Public Open Space

AVDC – Process For The Adoption of Open Space

Buckinghamshire County Council -  
Encouraging Walking In Buckinghamshire

Buckinghamshire County Council -  
Encouraging Cycling In Buckinghamshire

National Cycle Network -  
Guidelines and practical details